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# *Ting* *Drawn from Real Life*



**S. E. TING**

*Katharine R. Green*

One of the most prominent citizens of his community is Mr. S. E. Ting, the chief secretary at the British Consulate at Amoy, Fukien Province. Mr. Ting holds such a responsible position there that



several times in the absence of a resident Consul-General, he has been placed in charge of the affairs of the Consulate.

Mr. Ting is a Christian of the third generation. Some seventy years ago, in a village near Foochow, there lived a certain humble wood cutter by the surname of Ting. Every day he went to the nearby mountains to cut firewood which, on the regular market days, he carried to the surrounding towns to sell. Going around from town to town on various occasions Ting heard the Gospel message which took such a strong hold upon him that before long, he and his family began going to the church some three miles distant from their village.

This family was the only one in that village which accepted Christianity. They remained steadfast in spite of the resentment of their former friends, but things were often unpleasant and even dangerous for the Ting Family. One day, when Ting was alone on the mountainside, three other wood cutters began reviling him, threatening him with their sharp knives. These men falsely accused him of encroaching upon their "preserves." They were about to attack him when he made one request. He asked that before they did so, he be allowed three minutes for prayer. When he arose from his knees, Ting looked around for his persecutors. They were nowhere in sight.

Though himself unlettered, Ting determined that his son should get a good education, so he sent him to the church school. Later Son Ting at-



tended the Theological Seminary and became a preacher, much to the gratification of his old father.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about Son Ting was the wife whom he married. Mrs. Ting was, for those early days, a rare individual, a really well educated woman. She had become a trained doctor and was employed in a mission hospital in Foochow. To this couple were born three sons and a daughter. Our friend, "S.E.", the second son, was born in the Foochow Hospital in 1899.

When S.E. was three years old, the family moved to a town nearer the port of Amoy. There the doctor-mother was much occupied with her professional duties and the father took more responsibility in the management of the home. Both parents were deacons in the local church. Their children were brought up in a truly Christian fashion with high ideals of Christian service.

When he was thirteen, S.E. was sent to Kulangsu to attend the Anglo-Chinese College. For six and a half years he studied there, being interested, while a student, in Sunday School and Y.M.C.A. activities. During the summer of his seventeenth year he was admitted into full church membership. While still a student, Sherwood Eddy paid a visit to Amoy. His searching message deeply stirred young Ting. At a later date he was much inspired by the words of Mr. Buchman also .

In 1919 after his graduation from the Anglo-Chinese College, S.E. became a clerk at the British



Consulate. His advancement from time to time brought him several years ago to his present position of great responsibility. His civic interests placed upon him by the community are many and varied. He is a guiding spirit in all civic good works and in recognition of his outstanding position among his fellows, he wears in the lapel of his coat a rotarian button.

His interest in the Y.M.C.A. brought him membership on the Board of Managers in 1932 and since 1935 he has been its chairman. For years he has been on the Board of the Anglo-Chinese College and of the Amoy Girls' Middle School, founded by the Reformed Church Mission. He is on the Boards of three primary schools as well. The Hope Hospital claims him as a Board member, and he is chairman of the Board of the Kulangsu Hospital.

After the bombing of Amoy City in September, 1937, Kulangsu, being an International Settlement, became a place of refuge for thousands of homeless Chinese. During the following very difficult months, Mr. Ting was much occupied with the work of the relief committee of which he was vice-chairman. This and his connection with the British Consulate made him most unpopular with the Japanese and with many British and Americans he was interned in the Japanese Hospital. The Japanese used every means to win his "cooperation," but Ting told them frankly, "If I say that I will cooperate with you on all lines, I would be speaking falsely. I tell you this honestly. You say



that you will execute me — that makes no difference." To Mr. Ting's surprise the matter ended there. It was later that he heard the comment the Japanese commandant had made at the time, "That man Ting speaks the truth even though it may mean death. If only all Chinese were that frank and straightforward!"

During the occupation the Ting family lived quietly, and though there was constant danger and privation, they were not further molested.

Mr. Ting has serious family responsibilities for he is the father of six sons and two daughters. He and Mrs. Ting are bringing up their children in a thoroughly Christian home and are providing for each of them a good education. He is a staunch churchman and both he and his wife have been for many years deacons in one of the large Kunglung churches. As deacon and treasurer of the church he bears heavy financial responsibility for the proper management of the church funds. He has an excellent tenor voice and for years sang in the choir. He also has led the "Songsters," a group of Chinese and Westerners who love to sing and occasionally gave a concert.

The Ting children are following in the footsteps of their parents. They are all regular church goers, the family rarely missing a Sunday. Four of the boys are in the church choir, one of them being the pianist. The second son is in business. The third son and his fiancée are just graduating from



the Foochow Christian College. The fourth son is his father's assistant at the Consulate. Unfortunately, the eldest son has had a long illness, the result of malnutrition during the occupation. The two daughters and the younger sons are studying in Christian schools.

Such men and women as S. E. Ting and his good wife are the backbone of the Christian movement in China. May the good Lord increase their number.

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